Multiple Intelligences

*Chapter 1*

I barely knew anything about multiple intelligences before talking about it in class, and reading this first chapter helped me learn a lot more. It is very fascinating to learn about the ways that different intelligences affect the way a student learns, and in turn the way a classroom runs. The fact that people can innately lack in a certain intelligence tells me a lot about my future students. If a child is struggling with a particular task or concept, it could be because their mind simply doesn’t have as much strength in one area of intelligence as they do in another. It is never about them being stupid or unmotivated, teachers just need to realize that every student’s brain is structured differently. This is why it is important for teachers to be willing to try different methods of teaching, so that they can accommodate for the different styles of learning that are born into a student’s physiology and therefore should never be changed or stifled. It was also helpful to learn that most people are on the same level with being strong in some intelligences but lacking in others. I think the whole idea of Multiple Intelligences is a big step in the right direction in the field of education. It encourages creative, independent thought and denounces the notion that all students must learn the same way. In order to successfully reach our students, we need to start thinking about how *they* learn instead of how someone else *says* they should learn.

*Chapter 2*

I was unaware that Multiple Intelligences could be affected by so many external factors; I thought they were simply something that was hardwired into a person’s brain throughout their whole life. It is sad to think that a child’s potential for knowledge could be halted by something completely out of their control, such as socioeconomic factors or the influence of parents, but those are just challenges that a teacher must overcome. I think that one of the most important jobs of a teacher is to draw out knowledge in the face of various forms of resistance. The chapter’s ideas for how teachers can make up for lacking in a particular intelligence were very interesting too. I would really like to have the opportunity to team teach at some point in my career, so keeping in mind the different intelligences and learning styles when doing so will be very helpful. It was valuable to learn about the different ways that teachers can collaborate with their minds and different strengths, and that idea is definitely something I will take into the classroom with me. I also like how the author suggested having students use their own intelligence strengths to help out a teacher when their strengths don’t match up. This would create a very collaborative, inventive classroom environment that would allow students a chance to take on leadership positions in the classroom and to explore their individual talents in a way that benefits the classroom as a whole. These are all important things to remember once I am a teacher.

*Chapter 3*

I think the chapter’s suggestions on how to identify students’ intelligence strengths is something that is extremely useful and important in the classroom. Kids aren’t going to come right out and tell you what the need in order to learn effectively, mostly because they themselves do not know for sure. But as teachers, one of our most important jobs is to figure out ways to communicate with our students when they can’t or won’t be direct with us. Understanding nonverbal actions, uncovering the reason behind poor behavior, and picking up on social cues are all essential to both effective classroom management and successful instruction. Those are all things that I will try to do once I’m with my students. I think paying attention to mulitple intelligences is a good way to be an involved and considerate teacher, too. Getting to know your students that well can only benefit them, because not only are you aware of their specific learning strengths and weaknesses, but they also know that their teacher really cares about them succeeding, and research has shown that this does very positive things for classroom performance. Learning so much about multiple intelligences has taught me a lot about myself too, and being self-aware will help me become a better teacher. Im learning to be more patient with myself and to focus on the things that I am good at instead of getting caught up in the things I naturally struggle with. Being a good teacher means modeling self-respect to your students, and appreciating my own strengths while developing my weaknesses in a healthy way will encourage confidence in my students.

*Chapter 4*

This chapter about the various practical ways that a teacher can explain multiple intelligences to their students was very helpful and informative. I think makng students aware of their different intelligences can have an extremely positive benefit in the classroom, because it encourages kids to focus on their strenghts instead of their weaknesses. The quote on page 45 that says, “What did we do in the intervening years to convince children that they’re not intelligent?” really had an impact on me, and the meaning behind that is something I want to keep in mind when I am teaching. Based on numerous factors – peer pressure, society and the media, personal difficulties – by the time kids reach high school, a good portion of them have a relatively low opinion of themselves. This can affect their education by giving them less motivation to work through adademic challenges and by making them less likely to appreciate their own success. As teachers, we need to try to reverse those notions and teach students to value their own differences and talents, and teaching them about multiple intelligences is a good way to start doing that. I learned a lot about the different ways that teachers can adapt their lessons to the different intelligences of their students. In some ways, it can be as simple as planning a variety of activities for them as opposed to doing the same thing over and over again. I also learned that students are a lot more aware of their own academic strengths and weaknesses than we might think, especially younger students. Teachers need to remember that students are the best experts on themselves, so we need to start trusting their instincts about what they need to learn effectively.

*Chapter 10*

I really liked everything the chapter had to say about measuring students’ process against their own achievement, as opposed to measuring them only against each other or against a standard that someone else has set for them. Improvement and progress are definitely very important in the classroom, but if a student is improving compared to their own performance, isn’t that all that matters? Understandably, there is a level of proficiency that we want all students to reach, and it’s not to say that we shouldn’t still be aiming high for our students. However, I think it is reasonable that if a student continues to progress further and further based on their own achievement, we can assume that the curriculum and instruction has been a success and, barring a change in significant factors, the student will continue to improve. I think a major idea that both this book and*Fair Isn’t Always Equal*are trying to emphasize is that assessment should have a positive foundation. It should encourage progress and personal accomplishment instead of just numbers and scores. The chapter is right that we can’t differentiate instruction but not assessment; the personalized learning approach has to be carried through in all levels of learning. What I learned from this chapter is that assessment can be adapted to suit all levels of learning and forms of intelligence, and as teachers it is our duty to find ways to design tests and projects around the needs of our students so that we can get an accurate picture of their success in school.